

insects, which vary in kind according to the wasps collecting them. Any observant person may, during the summer months, watch the agile mother-wasp hunting for its special prey, which when captured is paralyzed by the potent venom injected by the captor's sting. Thus the grubs, when they hatch, have fresh meat provided for their voracious appetites, and at the same time are secure from injury by their victims. They are not, however, in all instances exempt from parasitic species, which find access to the cells during the course of construction and deposit eggs, from which larvæ hatch and proceed to consume the food so industriously stored, and either devour or starve, the rightful occupants.

The superfamily is divided into twelve families of which all but the Stizidæ (which includes the great cicada-hunters) and the Ampulicidæ (rare cockroach-catchers) have representatives in our district. The family Oxybelidæ furnishes two small species, of which the commoner one was found by the Peckhams to store with flies its burrows in the sand. The family Crabronidæ contains one-third of all our species, usually in livery of black and yellow. They may often be seen about old stumps and trees, disappearing in burrows made either by themselves or by some departed beetle. The food collected varies with the species. The Pemphredonidæ are rather small and generally black and their habits are much the same as those of the crabronids. Of the Bembicidæ we have only three species, of which two are common and are easily known by the long beak-like labrum. They are strong active insects frequenting sandy fields in which their burrows are stored probably with diptera. The Larridæ are more numerous and are more bee-like in form and in color black, with sometimes a red band on abdomen. In their burrows they store small grasshoppers, etc. The family Philanthidæ contains a half dozen handsome species, of which the two species of *Cerceris* are common. Some members of this genus have been found to provision their cells with beetles. The Trypoxylidæ utilize the deserted burrows of other insects, and store up spiders for their progeny. The only representative of the Mellinidæ is very rare and probably supplies flies for its young as an European species is said to prey upon diptera. The Nyssonidæ is the second of our families in number of species,